

ARTICLE APPEARED  
ON PAGE 1-AWASHINGTON TIMES  
25 July 1986

# Whitworth found guilty on 12 counts

By Bill Gertz  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

A federal jury in San Francisco yesterday found former Navy radioman Jerry Alfred Whitworth guilty of spying for the Soviet Union as part of the Walker family spy ring.

The jury of seven women and five men deliberated nine days before finding Whitworth, 46, guilty of 12 out of 13 espionage and tax-evasion counts. The deliberations followed a complicated trial that began in March.

Navy Secretary John Lehman praised the guilty verdict and denounced Whitworth for the damage he caused to U.S. national security.

"His treason did grievous damage to this nation," Mr. Lehman said. "Fortunately, it did not happen during a global war."

An Aug. 28 hearing was set for sentencing, although U.S. District

Court Judge John Vukasin said he was prepared to impose sentence immediately because virtually every aspect of Whitworth's life was documented during the trial and he felt well-acquainted with "his career, his personality, his beliefs."

After the verdict, defense attorney James Larson refused to say whether he would appeal.

John Martin, chief of the Justice Department's internal security section, said, "We are pleased and satisfied that justice has been done."

Prosecutors in the case argued that Whitworth played a central role in a "high-level KGB operation" and knew the information sold went to the Soviet Union.

Defense attorneys said Whitworth supplied secrets to Walker believing they would be sold only to Israel, other U.S. allies and to a defense pub-

lication, Janes' Fighting Ships.

Evidence presented by prosecutors showing Whitworth's knowledge of a Soviet connection included a series of letters, signed "RUS," that were sent anonymously to the FBI in 1984. The letters offered to expose a spy ring selling communications secrets to the Soviet Union.

Mr. Larson admitted that Whitworth had written the letters but said they showed only that he knew of the Soviets' involvement when he wrote them, after he had stopped delivering secrets to Walker.

Whitworth, who retired from the Navy in 1983, was the last defendant to be tried in the Walker espionage ring. He was convicted of receiving \$332,000 between 1974 and 1983 for funneling Navy communications secrets to Walker, who passed them on to Soviet KGB intelligence officials in exchange for more than \$1 million over 18 years.

The Soviet spy ring operated in the United States and involved clandestine meetings with Soviet agents in Asia and Europe.

Walker, a retired Navy communications specialist, testified in April at the Whitworth trial that the spy ring began in 1968. Walker said he was depressed by marital problems then and walked into the Soviet Embassy in Washington with top secret information used in coding and deciphering messages.

In the ensuing years, Walker, 48, recruited his son, Navy seaman Michael L. Walker, 23, and his brother, Arthur J. Walker, into the spy network. John Walker and Michael Walker pleaded guilty to espionage in Baltimore Oct. 25.

Arthur Walker, 51, was convicted on seven espionage counts in a Norfolk federal court Aug. 9 and was sentenced to life in prison.

U.S. officials said information from the the spy ring permitted the Soviet Union to monitor U.S. Navy fleet communications and operations around the world.

"It is the most serious security breach that the intelligence community has suffered since World War II," said Joseph Russoniello, U.S. attorney in San Francisco, in a recent interview.

The information provided to the Soviets, he said, enabled them to understand the methodology used to formulate and send coded Navy communications.

Navy Secretary Lehman told re-

porters the damage caused by the spy ring may cost the Navy \$100 million to repair and that the Soviets may still be able to monitor some communications with the information they bought from the Walkers and Whitworth.

U.S. officials say the Soviets could have learned intricate details about how U.S. naval command decisions are made and how to read all types of naval communications. The information also could have been used by the Soviets to make their submarines more difficult to detect with Navy tracking equipment.

Whitworth was found guilty of seven espionage counts, each carrying a maximum penalty of life in prison, and four counts of income tax evasion for which he could be sentenced to a total of 68 years. The jury cleared him of one espionage charge related to a contingency plan for military activities in the Middle East.

*This article is based in part on wire service reports.*